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Africa
West - Cameroon*

THE CAMEROONS.

(WEST AFRICA.)

Rec'd FEB 27 1919

BOLENCE, D. C. O. M.,

Cogulhatville, Congo Belge.

A Historical Review

By the

REV. T. VINCENT TYMMS, D.D.

WITH EXTRACTS FROM RECENT STATEMENTS BY
SIR HARRY H. JOHNSTON, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.

ALSO LETTERS FROM THE
Rev. R. WRIGHT HAY and the Rev. THOMAS LEWIS,
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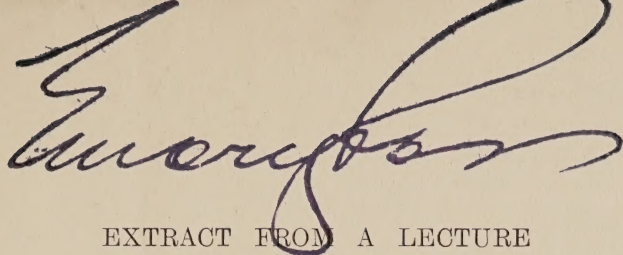
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EXTRACT FROM A LECTURE
TO THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY,
ON FEBRUARY 24TH, 1915,
BY SIR HARRY H. JOHNSTON, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.

“The result of any peace at all tolerable to the Allies must result in Germany being left with no ‘colonies’ outside Germany from which she can once more renew her intrigues with the non-Caucasian races to fight or to rebel against their Caucasian neighbours or guardians. We assume, therefore, that in one year’s, two year’s time the French, Belgians and ourselves will be able to lay down with some assurance of permanency the political geography of Africa during the next fifty years.

“France will regain all that portion of French Congo ceded to Germany in 1911, and in addition much of the south and east of German Cameroons. The north-west of the Cameroons, including the Sanaga River, must be added to British Nigeria.

“In this direction sentiment may well influence our action. We must not forget that the civilization of the West Cameroons was entirely due to a small but remarkable band of British Baptist Missionaries, who with their West Indian colleagues between 1842 and 1885 won over to orderly ways, to fruitful commerce, the Bantu-speaking negroes of this region. When Germany somewhat arbitrarily annexed the Cameroons in 1884 she believed the Baptist Mission to be a great obstacle in her path of Teutonizing this region. With something that might almost be termed brutality, the British Baptist Missionaries were expelled, their fine buildings were expropriated, and they were given the miserable sum of *£2,000 as compensation. We had, it is true, annexed one of their settlements—Ambas Bay—to the British Empire, but in order to be ungrudging in our recognition of Germany’s right to a good share of Africa for colonizing experiments, we transferred Ambas Bay and the magnificent Cameroons volcano to her in 1887. Whatever disposition of Cameroons territory may take place as the result of amicable discussions between France and Britain, all the western portion of the Cameroons must revert, I might almost say, to us, for it was taken over by us—all but a few square miles on the Cameroons River—in 1884-1885. The trade language of all this region is English. As one of the revenges of history I want to see the British Baptist Missionaries once again established in the Cameroons, just as I do not wish to die until mass has been sung in Saint Sophia’s Church in Constantinople.”

* In exact figures £2,750—see p. 22.

EXTRACT FROM AN ARTICLE BY
SIR HARRY JOHNSTON
IN
"THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE."

"On account of the truculence of the natives, the Cameroons coast remained a scarcely known region, until the middle of the nineteenth century. Then a great change took place. What men-of-war with cannon could not effect, humble missionaries brought about. The British Baptist Mission had established itself from about 1840 in the island of Fernando Po, a Spanish possession, which also has a large mountain, and lies opposite to the Cameroons, about twenty miles distant. The other marvellous mountain seen across the narrow strait attracted their curiosity, and they soon despatched agents to found missionary stations on the mainland; not white men, but educated negroes from the West Indies, men actually remarkable at that time for their wide and sound education. Noteworthy amongst these Baptist pioneers was Joseph Merrick, a genius in African Philology, who has laid us under a lasting debt by his dictionary of the Isubu tongue, a work quoted over and over again by students of Africa, and notably by German philologists.

"The West Indian missionaries were soon followed by white colleagues, and the real apostle of the Cameroons was Alfred Saker. I do not use the word with the emotional gush which often characterises missionaries' records, but in a sense which could be appreciated by all men and women of the world, whatever their religious beliefs or disbeliefs. Alfred Saker converted the Duala clans to real and permanent civilization. The Cameroons—as I can testify in my experience of thirty years ago—became a country safe for the harmless white man to travel in.

"Whatever happens as a result of the present war and the peace which must follow some day, the Western part of this huge German dominion—all bearing the name of 'Kamerun,' though it stretches to Lake Chad and the Congo basin—must be returned to the sceptre of Great Britain. The British Baptists must be invited to resume the work so well begun by Merrick, Saker, Fuller, and Grenfell."

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To those who remember the events of thirty years since there is a peculiar significance in the fact that Germany has been deprived of the Cameroons. She did not become the owner of this fine country because it was discovered by one of her subjects, nor through any peaceful process of colonisation, but by a violent assault in which she trampled on the rights of the native population and defied the several European governments which had at least a prior claim to its acquisition. For Baptists, however, the outstanding fact is, that by this military annexation the missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society were driven from a land which for more than forty years had been made lustrous by the labours and sacrifices, and heroic deaths, of many good soldiers of Jesus Christ. No formal act of expulsion was decreed, but the country was ravaged, the people either killed or scared into flight from burned houses and desolated fields; and the British Missionaries were so insulted and threatened, so obstructed in their efforts to

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make peace, that a continuance of their work was impossible.

It has been thought that a brief review of the Cameroons Mission and its tragic ending would be timely and instructive at the present season. Let me, however, at once state that nothing like a complete history will be possible; and that the special object in writing in this hour, when God's judgments are abroad in the earth, is to exhibit the Mission in its external aspects, and especially in its political relations with the several governments with which it has had to deal. Such a review may have little value in comparison with the story of spiritual activities and triumphs, but it is not uncalled for in the present crisis.

The Cameroons Mission had its origin in the desire of many British Christians to make some reparation to the people of Africa for the wrongs inflicted upon them by the slave trade. This desire to bring forth some fruit meet for repentance met and united with an intense longing which grew up among newly emancipated slaves in Jamaica to carry back to the land of their fathers that gospel of spiritual freedom which had compensated themselves for all their sufferings in the land of bondage. Both these yearnings pointed to the foundation of a missionary colony on the west coast of Africa, and when the Baptist Missionary Society celebrated its Jubilee it was felt that thankfulness for the past fifty years could best find expression by a bold inauguration of such an enterprise.

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In 1840 the Rev. John Clarke and Dr. G. K. Prince, both of Jamaica, made a pioneer journey to discover the most suitable place for occupation. With excellent judgment they selected the island of Fernando Po, which faces the mouth of the Cameroons River, and commands the entrance to several other rivers which are natural highways into the interior of the continent.

The island of Fernando Po was discovered by the Portuguese in 1471, and was held by them until 1778, when they ceded it to Spain. In a few years it was abandoned, and in 1837 was informally appropriated by the British Government, and was used without protest as a place of harbourage for vessels engaged in the suppression of the slave trade. Before long a colony was planted in the island, consisting of artisans and labourers from Sierra Leone, together with negroes of many different tribes rescued from slave ships. Hence it happened that the first missionaries found many of the inhabitants able to understand their language, and well disposed to British rule.

Unhappily, Spain was induced by the enhanced value of the place as a trading centre to revive her claim to its possession. Her revived interest was also quickened by the anger of the Jesuits when the arrival of a Protestant Mission was reported. She was compelled to admit that the colonists were British subjects and were actually living under English law, and she certainly could not pretend that she had effectually occupied the island, but she

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pressed her claim. It is probable that Great Britain could lawfully have resisted this claim, and there can be no doubt of her power, but this was not used. It is easy to perceive strong moral and political reasons why Spain should have been kept out of the country she had so long neglected, but possibly the British Foreign Minister had still stronger reasons for being generous to a weaker nation. In any case it is worthy of note that the land-hunger with which the British have been reproached can never be detected in this rather tame surrender of many loyal and grateful subjects to the yoke of Spain.

At first it appeared unlikely that the new rulers would seriously interfere with the mission. The British nationality of the colonists was freely recognised, and a formal pledge was given in 1841 that "personal liberty, property and religion should be secure to every inhabitant." Relying on this assurance missionary work was begun with great hopefulness, and was carried on for four years with vigour, and with encouraging tokens of success, not only in the island but in new stations on the river.

On Christmas Day, 1845, the real attitude of the Spanish crown was disclosed. On that day a gun-boat arrived at Clarence, and landed a new Spanish Consul-General, who at once announced his instructions to banish the missionaries unless they would consent to remain "in a private capacity only." Having no mind to hide their light and dwell in silence among the heathen, all the brethren, led by

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Mr. Saker, refused to comply with this demand, and left the Consul to eject them if his commission compelled him to do it. It is pleasant to record that this official was so favourably impressed by the personality of the missionaries, and so satisfied that they were conferring great benefits on the population, and raising the status of the colony, that he ultimately agreed to give them a year's grace in which to arrange for their departure. He also sanctioned their meeting for public worship and preaching, and their tuition of children in their schools, during this interval of grace. While this period was running out, a Roman Catholic bishop set up a rival mission and hoped to attract the people to his services by ritualistic display. He utterly failed, however, and returned to Spain in 1846. It is delightful to record that this good man had the courage and candour to testify publicly that the Protestant mission was exerting a most salutary influence in Fernando Po, and he made special mention of the debt he personally owed to Dr. Prince for medical attention.

For ten years Saker and his comrades were unmolested. They lived under the shadow of a probable interference, but this made them the more eager to redeem the season lest it should prove to be short. During this period the gospel had many triumphs and the Christian community increased in numbers, in knowledge and intelligence, and in self-denying devotion to the service of Christ in the regions round about.

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In 1856 the long dreaded blow fell. A bishop of harsher spirit than the last arrived upon the scene, attended by a considerable retinue of Jesuit priests. Their avowed purpose was to close the Protestant Mission and to expel its ministers. They found themselves, however, without sufficient authority to achieve their design, and returned to Spain for fuller powers. Finally, in 1858, the Governor-General of all the islands owned by Spain in West Africa arrived with a new company of Jesuits and proclaimed that thenceforth no religion would be tolerated in Fernando Po other than that of the Roman Catholic Church. Professors of other religions were commanded to restrict their worship to their private houses, and to the members of their own families. This decree was read in Clarence before a handful of sorrowful people, to the fitting accompaniment of a tropical storm of extraordinary violence. On that same evening the people met for the last time in the house they had built for God.

Expostulation failed to move the relentless Governor, and there was no hope of relief through an appeal to the Crown. Submission was inevitable, and after many prayerful consultations the leaders resolved to seek a new location. The stations at Cameroons and Bimbia were not under Spanish rule, and the exiles from Clarence might profitably have reinforced the staff in one or both of these centres, but this would have involved a curtailment of influence and the serious disadvantage of distance

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from the sea. Without delay, therefore, Saker set out to explore the coast in a northerly direction. After a toilsome and somewhat perilous journey the party found its way to a place known as Amba Bay, and saw it to be a land prepared of God for their reception. After a careful survey, Saker had a truly statesmanlike prevision of what a precious possession it might become if made the home of a Christian colony, with human life, property and freedom secured under the ægis of the British flag.

Amba Bay, soon to be known as Victoria, had been used by the commander of the Niger expedition in 1841, and was reported to the Admiralty as in every way desirable as a naval base, except for the absence of a safe landing place. A long line of heavy surf was visible from the ships, and no one suspected that a calm sheet of water lay behind those breakers. Saker found what the English officers missed, and this discovery filled him with exultant joy. It is idle to dwell upon what might have been, but it is difficult to read his glowing, yet altogether sober report without reflecting on the different history which might have been written if our Foreign Office had done in good time what it tardily tried too late to do in 1884.

Writing to the Committee, Saker alluded to Captain Allen's defective survey, and told them what he himself had found, and what expectations it had formed in his mind.

"I need a home for our people, where a trade may be created and to which commerce

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may be drawn. I search for a landing only ; and behold ! God hath hidden, up a deep interior bay, for ages—a bay with nearly two miles of beach—without a stone, and almost without a wave, large enough to contain a thousand boats and small vessels ; while the Amboises Bay will contain a navy. Into this bay the sea breeze blows in all its purity, and the mountain wind at night in all its freshness. Here, if Her Majesty's Government sanction and sustain our efforts, can be put up coal stores, provision stores, building-yards, and every other essential for commerce. Here, too, a highway may be made into the interior, and the native produce be shipped in smooth water for Europe. It will be a centre of civilization, freedom and light. It will be essentially a religious, enlightened colony. And here also, under British protection, the Lord's people may worship God without molestation."

It is important to observe that although the hope of a British protectorate was foredoomed to disappointment, it was not an unreasonable or extravagant imagination. There were at the time no legal or political obstacles to be overcome, but on the contrary the English missionaries were praying for a protection which had already been sought by the native chief and his people. Indeed it soon transpired that these people already regarded themselves as the subjects of Queen Victoria, inasmuch

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as their chief had formally surrendered their country to Colonel Nichols, by whose gracious permission he was allowed to style himself "King William!" He also willingly sold his remaining rights as owner of the soil to Mr. Saker for the Society he represented. The price in English currency would probably be insignificant, but it fully satisfied the seller, and the transaction was sealed in a proper legal document. Thus the door was widely opened for the official completion of what Colonel Nichols had done. But for many years no step was taken. Possibly our Foreign Ministers had some occult reason for refusing to appropriate an invaluable gift. Probably they yielded to a supine reluctance to undertake further responsibilities and were infected with the idea then prevalent that colonies are a source of weakness and expense. Again and again appeals were made, but Tory and Liberal ministers were equally deaf to the cry "Come and reign over us!" and the Settlement of Victoria was left to endure the manifold evils which arise where no competent civil authority resides.

One of the gravest of the consequences flowing from this policy of inaction was that temporal authority was slowly but inevitably thrust into Mr. Saker's hands. He struggled against the insidious way in which magisterial functions were imposed upon him. He never exalted himself, or sought for dominion, but he was the strong man, the wise, just and venerable man to whom the natives insisted upon bringing their disputes, and

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to whom they looked for the maintenance of order and peace, not only in the Christian township, but in the outlying districts to which people from the interior were attracted by the prosperity which the colony enjoyed.

The most remarkable evidence of this unsought but much needed personal authority may be seen in the code of laws drawn up for the government of the country. (Printed at the end of Dr. Underhill's *Biography of Saker*.) These laws "for the better security of the settlers, and for the suppression of disorderly conduct and crime," are admirable for their breadth of view, their moderation and practical sagacity, and above all for their noble ideal of citizenship. They were urgently needed, and without doubt their firm administration made for the common weal. It must, however, be confessed that the work of a magistrate does not lie within the province of a Missionary; and it must also be acknowledged that the English constitution forbids any of its citizens to bear rule over others in any part of the world unless expressly authorised by Royal Charter. The position was one of extreme difficulty. Not to meet the crying needs of the people seemed cowardly and even morally impossible; and the English Governments, which knew all the facts yet refused to intervene, were assuredly responsible for any irregularity in the efforts made to maintain order until their refusal could be overcome.

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In spite of all discouragements and all diversions of energy in necessary, though undesired directions, the Churches at Victoria and on the Cameroons River progressed for many years in numbers and in influence for good. Passing over these years of peaceful development I must come to the catastrophe which brought the work of our English messengers to a lamentable close.

The explorations of Stanley and De Brazza excited a worldwide interest in African affairs, and several European governments, anxious to obtain places "in the sun," betrayed their wish to grasp a share of the newly opened Continent. Portugal, France and Belgium were all attracted by the manifold advantages of the Cameroons. Great Britain also was at last brought to see the value of the land she had so long declined to enter. Fearing a sudden annexation by another Power, the native chiefs, in concert with our missionaries and with many traders of different nationalities, including some Germans, entreated Consul Hewett instantly to hoist the British flag. Having no official status in the country he declined to act, and for two years nothing was done.

At length, on July 8th, 1884, a gunboat arrived with the news that Mr. Hewett would soon arrive with full authority to take formal possession of the country. There was great joy in many hearts, and Mr. Saker's dream seemed on the point of being realized. But unhappily Mr. Hewett did not come at the time stated, and while he tarried another

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Power, too well informed of what was happening, took sudden action.

On July 11th, a German gunboat arrived, and the next day her commander signed a bogus Treaty with one of the native chiefs, who owned a small strip of land, and by this absurd instrument Germany was declared to be the purchaser of the immense stretch of territory now marked on the maps as "German Kamerun."

This action was a great surprise to all parties, for up to this point Germany had betrayed no sign of any such intention. It was of course resented by Portugal and France and by our own dilatory Foreign Office and its slack messenger, but diplomacy has no remedy for an accomplished fact, as Germany well knew. It was easy to denounce the ridiculous defects of the Treaty, but no criticisms or expostulations were of any avail.

Before long this farce of land purchase was turned into a tragedy. The pretended vendor of the country added to his guilt by refusing to hand over any share of the price he received to the chiefs who really owned almost all the land, and these men, enraged by his nefarious conduct, made a furious attack upon his town. This outbreak supplied an excuse for military action by the Germans in defence of their creature "King Bell," whose right to sell they were resolved at any cost to maintain. In December, two hundred armed men ascended the Cameroons River and destroyed two small boats and killed a few native fishermen

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who were plying their peaceful craft. They followed up this heroic exploit by slaughtering many unarmed people, looting their supplies of food, and laying waste their villages. Subsequently they pretended that Messrs. Silvey and Lewis had instigated the natives in their armed resistance to authority, and on this pretext totally destroyed all the property of the Mission at Hickory Town. The Mission House at Bell Town was riddled by bullets while Mr. Lewis was actually in residence. To explain and vindicate this violent conduct a cartoon was published in Germany depicting an English Missionary leading a band of negroes into battle, with a Bible in one hand and a pistol in the other. The policy of "frightfulness" and of manufactured "news" is not a new thing to-day.

The situation in Victoria differed from that on the Cameroons River. The British Government made a belated and feeble claim to this territory, partly, though not solely on the ground that it was demonstrably the property of the Baptist Missionary Society. The claim, however, was probably a move in the diplomatic game in which Lord Granville was planning to hand over Victoria in return for some other strip of land on the same coast.

In order to understand the manner in which the Mission was ousted from the country certain facts must be kept in view. Without any attempt on the part of the British Government to guard the interests of the Mission, Germany was obligingly

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allowed to appropriate all the adjacent territory in a way which cut all communications with the hinterland and left the missionaries with no approach except from the sea. This not only meant that the colonists would lose their prosperous trade as importers and exporters, but also that their evangelistic journeys into the interior would, under various pretexts, be obstructed, if not absolutely forbidden, and that they would be living in a sort of Naboth's Vineyard, with a mighty neighbour hemming them in and waiting only for a convenient moment to obtain his desire.

Another fact of singular importance is that in negotiating with Prince Bismarck, Lord Granville was by some means beguiled into making a promise which fatally weakened the position. He pledged the British Government, should it remain in possession of Victoria, not to make any use of the place as a naval or coaling station, or to use it in any way that might be objectionable to the Imperial Government. Having received this promise, Bismarck felt, and blandly said, in his interview with the B. M. S. Secretary, Mr. A. H. Baynes, that it gave Germany all she required, and left it certain that before long the country must pass into her full possession. Ownership of the soil was robbed of almost all its value, and it was possible for Bismarck to tell the Baptist Missionary Society that they had nothing to sell which he had any wish to buy.

Conditions might have been made protecting the

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rights of the Society, and those of the settlers who had done so much to give value to the place. The Committee of the Mission naturally expected to obtain equitable terms of purchase, and a guarantee of liberty to continue their Christian work. But nothing of this sort was demanded. The following extract from a letter written to Count Munster will show that the Mission authorities were left to make what terms they could; and how the only ground on which they could stand to negotiate was loosened under their feet.

“As soon as the German Government should be able to come to a satisfactory arrangement with the missionaries, there being no political necessity involved, the difficulty as to the cession of Victoria to Germany by England would disappear, and Her Majesty’s Government would be ready to agree to its being included in the Territories to be placed under the German Government.”

It would be easy to point out the numerous defects of this flimsy writing. It omits any reference to the Society as legally the owner of the soil; and it carefully avoids any statement of claim, or any indication of the nature and extent of the satisfaction which would be regarded as adequate. Hence it left the way open for Bismarck to declare to Mr. Baynes that it had reference “only and solely” to the consent of the missionaries to exchange British for German rule at Victoria! This consent to give themselves and their possessions to Germany was

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to be regarded as a satisfactory settlement of all their claim to compensation; and Bismarck further assured Mr. Baynes that Lord Granville had avowed his own conviction that this consent would be given without any objection being raised. It is not surprising that Mr. Baynes was amazed and mortified by the unsuspected betrayal of the interests he had gone to Berlin to represent; nor is it surprising that, on hearing his report, the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society placed on record their "deliberate judgment" that they "had been very hardly treated by their own Government. . . ."

In connection with this disappointing conference it is interesting and not uninteresting to recall one of its minor incidents. Before leaving England Mr. Baynes had forwarded to Berlin a bound volume containing a concise statement of facts, together with copies of all essential documents and correspondence. While conversing with the Prince, Mr. Baynes saw this book lying open on the table, yet when he referred to some of the facts therein attested, he was met with a profession of total ignorance. "I have no knowledge of these things," Bismarck repeatedly declared, and refused to admit them as a basis of discussion. Had the information reached him through the Foreign Office it must have been either admitted or disproved, but because lacking an official character it was for diplomatic purposes non-existent. This incident vividly shows how helpless the Missionary Society was when left alone to negotiate with the German Empire.

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While the question of purchase by Germany was still pending, it became clear that the missionaries would be unable to continue their operations, and that either with or without compensation they would have to retire from the Cameroons and from Victoria. Without prejudice, therefore, to their rights as land-owners, the Committee decided to invite the Basle Mission to take over the work both at Victoria and the Cameroons, taking also the mission-houses, chapel and schools at an agreed price and under well defined conditions, of which the chief were—the maintenance of full religious liberty and equality ; the equitable treatment of all persons having business relations with the Society, or its agents ; and a contribution towards a new chapel for Baptist Christians, if they found the services of the new Mission unacceptable. This proposal was ultimately accepted, and with the approval of Prince Bismarck, the sum of £4,000 was fixed as the price to be paid for the properties named. Other valuable assets, including the Dualla Scriptures and numerous educational works were left for valuation at a future time.

Reviewing this arrangement the Committee recorded its thankful satisfaction that, if not by themselves yet by other servants of Christ, there was to be a continuance of the work which had been carried on for so many years and at such a great cost of loving labour and heroic sacrifice ; but their feelings were a little too sanguine, for the agreement was not fulfilled as they expected.

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The question of price was reopened, and the gross sum finally received was only £2,750. It has also to be regretted that the agents of the Basle Mission failed to win the confidence and affection of the people. This may not have been due to any real fault on their part as individuals, for their position was beset with grave difficulties, but in the minds of the natives, they were inseparably associated with German invaders; and the members of the several churches felt themselves unable to welcome their religious ministrations.

In addition to a natural repugnance to German men and institutions, the people were Baptists and were convinced that their principles and practice needed freer scope than would be possible under the ecclesiastical system they were invited to adopt. From the outset, therefore, these native Christians resolved to maintain an independent organisation and to exercise their spiritual gifts for mutual edification, and for the evangelisation of their heathen neighbours.

The subsequent history of these churches does not fall within the limits of this pamphlet. It must be said, however, that the action so boldly taken was speedily justified by its result. Native leaders entered into the labours of departed missionaries, and displayed a truly remarkable power of initiative, with a fervour of spirit and practical sagacity which had not been manifest while white men bore the pastoral staff. To these leaders the people made a loyal response. It becomes us

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therefore to praise God for a noble development of Christian character and manhood which transmuted hindrance to opportunity, turned loss into gain, and now emboldens us to cherish greater faith in the capacity of African Christians to work out the will of God in the redemption of their downtrodden race.

In the year 1890 the Baptist Churches of Germany formed a Missionary Society and began work in Kamerun. This mission has been very successful. At the time of the outbreak of the war there were nearly thirty German Missionaries, men and women, on their staff.

Looking back over the tragic story thus recalled to our attention, I am tempted to wonder whether the present retributive events will bring about a deferred fulfilment of Saker's fair dream of a happy community living at Victoria in the light of Christian principles, and under the easy yoke of British rule. In the interests of the population such an issue may well be desired, but for other reasons it might be better for England to decline an allotment of this colony to herself. It may be that she will favour the aspirations of France for such an addition to her adjacent territories; or, France and England may unite in ceding the country to Belgium in partial compensation for her maltreatment at home, though of course taking effectual guarantees for the civil and religious rights of the people. But whatever may happen when peace has been restored to the world, the history we have reviewed exhibits

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our country in an aspect which foreigners are slow to recognise. In some respects it is unique, but it illustrates the general truth that world empire has come, and promises to remain with England, not because of her military and naval might, but mainly because her sway means liberty of life and thought, and is founded on the willingness and loyalty of those she rules. Fernando Po might have been hers had she chosen to lift her flag over the poor creatures she had rescued from bondage. Ambas Bay (or Victoria) had been annexed by Great Britain, and Cameroons might have been hers had she not for so many years refused the prayer of its inhabitants. There is nothing for us to boast of in this policy of abstention, and if the secrets of diplomacy were disclosed we might find little to blame. Rather let us pray that these painful happenings may be over-ruled for good, and help on the surely coming day when the knowledge of God's glory shall cover the habitable world.

LETTER FROM THE REV. R. WRIGHT HAY,
WHO WAS A MISSIONARY IN THE CAMEROONS AT THE TIME
OF THE GERMAN OCCUPATION.

It is well that Dr. Tymms' clear and concise statement of events connected with the work of the Baptist Missionary Society in Cameroons, and the bearing upon it of the policy and the procedure of Germany thirty years ago, should appear at this time.

I was at Victoria, Ambas Bay, when the British Flag was hoisted there by a Commander in the Royal Navy, and the expectation was encouraged that ere long the whole country would be annexed to the British Crown.

I was also, alas, one of those whose hospitality—as British subjects—was abused by the Imperial German Commissioner, Dr. Nachtigal, who, pretending to have come to Cameroons on a visit of purely scientific investigation, utilized what information he could incidentally glean in the working of his cunning plans for the capture of the country for Germany.

I saw something of the movement of the “mailed fist” in the establishment of German rule there, and of the quivering of the helpless natives under it.

And therefore I am thankful that this pamphlet has been written at a time when Germany, applying on a larger scale the very principles on which she acted then, has dragged the world into war—a war in the process of which Cameroons is slipping from her grasp.

For one thing it ought to confirm faith in the Divine working under which Truth and Righteousness must eventually prevail.

R. WRIGHT HAY.

LETTER FROM THE REV. THOMAS LEWIS,
WHO WAS A MISSIONARY IN THE CAMEROONS AT THE TIME
OF THE GERMAN OCCUPATION.

It has been a great pleasure to me to read Dr. Tymms' excellent account of the Cameroons Mission, and of the circumstances which led the Baptist Missionary Society to abandon its work in a field so richly and signally blessed of God during many years. It is well that at the present time our thoughts should be thus brought back to the efforts of our early Missionaries from Jamaica, and the colossal labours of Alfred Saker and others who lived, wrought, and died in the Master's service at the Cameroons. These men's names are honoured and revered to-day among hundreds of the dusky sons of Africa, who pass on to their children and grandchildren the story of how they were taught by the English missionaries.

My sojourn as a missionary among these people was brief, covering only three and a half years, but I treasure the thought that they were the first years of my missionary career. The intervening thirty years in happy service on the Congo have not diminished one whit of my love for Cameroons and its people, and my heart is still there. It was my first love. My disappointment and sorrow were great and real when I was compelled to leave a people to whom I had devoted my life.

I am now the only missionary on the active list of our Society who went through those exciting and anxious times of the German occupation, and I am naturally deeply interested in the possibilities of the future when this terrible war ends. Changes must come, but it is not for us missionaries to say what is to be done—we leave this to statesmen, but we watch developments. If new duties and responsibilities are forced upon us as a result of this present world catastrophe, we must face them boldly and rise to the occasion.

We are not unmindful of the noble work done in the Colony by our German brethren, and I, for one, have no desire to see any of them retire. At the present time we see only possibilities of changes quite beyond our control. If, in the Providence of God, the German missionaries cannot or will not resume work at Cameroons when the war is over, then it may become the duty of the Baptist Missionary Society once more to occupy the old Mission field, made for ever sacred to British Baptists by the lives and labours of Alfred Saker, Fuller, Quintin Thomson and others. And if this should come to pass—and this is the chief reason why I write this

letter—*my one desire and hope is to be allowed to return to my former sphere of work and spend the remainder of my days among the people to whose welfare I devoted my life thirty-three years ago.* This desire was lately stimulated very considerably by meeting on my way home at Stanley Pool three young men from Cameroons whose fathers were my faithful helpers years ago, one of them a son of a girl who was brought up in our house at Bethel Station. From these men I learnt that two of my own lads are now pastors of prosperous native churches and doing splendid work.

I pray God, if it be His Will, that I may once more have the privilege and joy of returning to work among them.

THOMAS LEWIS.

12th July, 1915.

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